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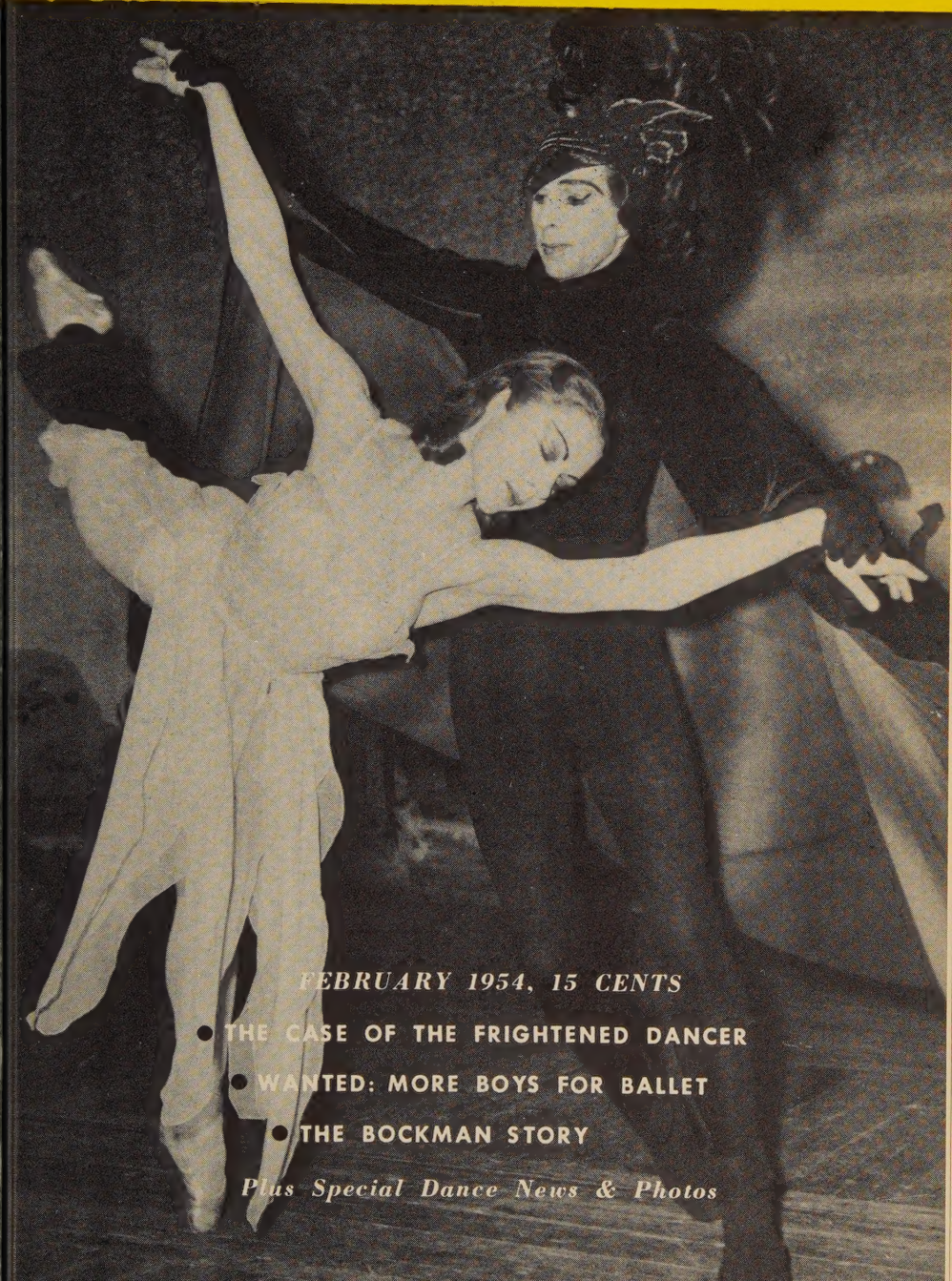

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Dancing Star

[A NATIONAL PUBLICATION]

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Beriosova and Brian Ashridge in Sadler's Wells' 'The Shadow' by John Cranko.

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At rehearsal. Left to right: Jane Bockman, Kenneth Johnson and Charles Bockman.

The Bockman Story

ROD QUIROS

What would you do if, at the peak of your dance career, your dream world suddenly crumbled around you? What would you do if, while in the midst of a successful musical comedy run they carted you off to the hospital--and informed you in hushed tones that you were the victim of a dreaded, body-crippling disease known as multiple sclerosis?

One thing you WOULDN'T do is give up...You wouldn't if you had the tenacity, foresight and determination of Charles Bockman; for that's exactly what happened to him some eight years ago...but let's retrace in retrospect the astounding career of this highly talented choreographer.

A native Chicagoan, Charles Bockman first became acquainted with ballet while working at the YMCA. He began studying the dance with a professional teacher. Almost from his first lesson he knew he had found his life's work. All his spare time went into lessons and practice...

In 1944 he joined Ballet Theatre and the following summer, worked at Radio City Music Hall. Then came the musicals, 'Artists and Models' and 'Mary Ann' after which, he went to work with Novikoff at the Metropolitan Opera. This was followed with a run in 'The Merry Widow'. And after that came 'Song Of Norway'.

It was while he was dancing in the latter show that multiple sclerosis hit him. After five long months in the hospital, Charles Bockman was discharged. Ahead of him lay months of slow recovery. Much of this time he spent on a Wisconsin farm in an effort to gain

back some of the strength in his badly crippled legs--for it was in them that the disease had left its tell-tale marks.

When Bockman finally returned to Chicago he found his friends waiting to welcome him. True friends,they were,who believed in him and in his ability as a dancer. They not only encouraged him to open a dance school--but backed up their faith in him by enrolling as his first dance students. To Charles Bockman, the faith of his friends was reassuring. He made up his mind that if he could no longer dance--he could at least pass on to others his knowledge of the medium he had built his life around.

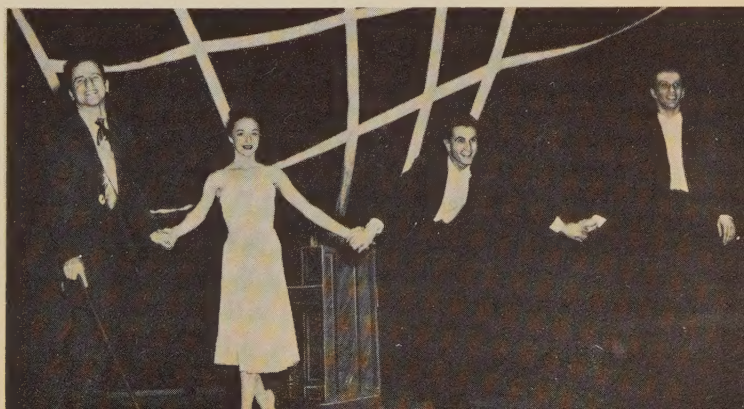
Charles Bockman's first dance school was in the basement of a neighborhood hotel. In the beginning pupils were scarce and teaching, difficult,for he had to instruct with the aid of a cane,or by holding onto a chair or table. But those who did find their way to this basement school were impressed with the man and his ability, and they stayed. In time others came and they too, remained, until finally the Bockman school was firmly established.

In 1948-49 Bockman presented his students in works he himself had choreographed. Among them were 'La Belle Hellene' and Hayden's 'Surprise Symphony'. Then in 1950 The Ballet Guild of Chicago called on him, and for their premiere performance he choreographed his first important work, 'Divertimento', an abstract ballet to Mozart music that two years later Balanchine was to use in his ballet 'Caracole'.

The following year found Bockman again working with The Ballet Guild. This time he choreographed the ballet 'The Words Beneath Us' to the poems of Mark Turbyfill. Then, in 1952 he created his finest work to date, a ballet titled 'The Theme' to the music of Neal Kayan. His inspiration for this work was his wife, Jane, who had been one of his first dance students. It was her lyrical dancing which made this work into one of Chicago's finest ballet offerings.

It was around this time that Charles Bockman began to feel the growing need for larger quarters in which to work and live. By diligent research he located an old, three story house in Chica- ☛

After a performance of 'The Theme'. Left to right: Charles Bockman, Jan Bockman, Neal Kayan and Ken Johnson. -A Jo Banks Phot



go's South Side. With what money he had managed to save and borrow he bought the structure. Now that he owned it, there was still one catch...it had to be completely remodelled. And with material and labor costs so high he began to wonder if he had done the right thing by investing so much in his project.

Again his friends and students proved their loyalty. By combining know-how with hard work, these enterprising dancers set about removing walls, sanding floors, rearranging plumbing and doing countless other works of labor required of a first class remodelling job. There were times when they worked around the clock--but they still managed to get in their usual dance lessons...

Then came the day when the final lick of paint was applied, and the final nail driven. What had once been an antiquated structure is now an eye-appealing building which serves the Bockmans as both home and studio. The third floor they rent out to students and dancers.

Three of Bockman's works 'Divertimento' 'The Words Beneath Us' and 'The Theme' were presented last Spring by the Bockman Ballet for the University of Chicago. And this past November, The Ballet Guild of Chicago premiered his latest ballet 'Nocturne' to Debussy's music.

Today, Charles Bockman, aided by his wife, Jane, and inspired by his four-year-old son, Jeff, climbs steadily up the proverbial ladder of success. At this writing he is busy working on a ballet the Multiple Sclerosis Foundation has commissioned him to do. Significantly enough, this ballet will be based indirectly on his own life, and will be presented at the Opera House. A fitting tribute to a fine artist and a courageous man.

Charles Bockman, hand over eye, checks on cast seconds before performance. -A Jo Banks Photo

METHODS AND PLANNING FOR GROUP INSTRUCTION IN SOCIAL DANCING

BYRNES AND SWANSON

The rules quoted below are general.

The teacher must bear in mind that the class, although composed of individuals, is a unit. One teaches the unit, not the individual or small segments of the unit.

The teacher must always bear in mind the dignity of the unit and the individual. Never make fun of either—Mimicry and pointed individual criticism are unnecessary. Nor is it wise to make unfavorable comparisons between class and teacher. If you must, make fun of yourself — not the individual or the class.

As in other fields, the principals are the same. We observe six cardinal rules:

1. Preparation

Without preparation, no class can be successful even if you are a genius. Be modest. Prepare thoroughly. Rehearse not only the figures you are going to present, but also the words and phrases you will use in presenting them. Strive for the most descriptive terminology short of talking down to the class. Have your material so ordered that one step or figure flows into the next with logic and ease. Preparation is most important. If you prepare, you should easily work a class from memory or brief notes on a 3 x 5 card.

2. Introduction

Briefly give the class a verbal summary of what you will present. **Do not** lecture or sermonize. Be pleasant.

3. Presentation

Briefly show the class what the figures or movements for the lesson will look like as a finished product. **Don't show yourself off** — show off the **material.**

a) The second step in Presentation begins to involve the actual teaching. You must **sell** the material.

4. Analysis and Drill

The ladies and gentlemen are shown their parts in the dance. First they drill their own moves, then they drill as couples. Depending on the circumstances or material, arrange the class in:

a) One line,
b) Two lines (One of ladies and one of gentlemen)
c) One line of couples or,
d) A circle of individuals or couples.

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5. Review and individual coaching after the drill, separately and in couples.

The students should be requested to practice what they have just learned. Now the teacher's opportunity for individual coaching presents itself. During the course of the lesson, he or she will have noticed faults of one kind or another in many of the students. **Quickly, briefly** and **quietly** the teacher should have a word with each couple, pointing out mistakes in a kindly, and **never** sarcastic manner — and being quick to give praise where it is due. While the teacher must not be caught for any long discussion with any one pupil, he must talk to all even to playing several records.

6. Conclusion

Demonstrate the finished figures again for visual impact and style. Point out the natural mistakes the student will make in striving for steps and neglecting style. Urge them to practice. Tell them they are a fine group, that they have made good progress and send them home liking the dance and you.

RANDOM THOUGHTS ABOUT TEACHING

Teach subject matter at level of student or students.

All steps and no dancing make a pupil a bad advertisement.

It is better to learn to do a few steps well than to partially learn many steps.

Did you learn each step as quickly as you expect your pupils to?

Teach Lead and Follow. Learning to lead or follow is more important than just learning step patterns.

Can you teach for ten minutes without using "DON'T"? Try it.

While the teacher lectures, pupils are under a strain, painfully paying attention to rhythm, count, etc. **This is work.** However, if they are allowed to practice what has been taught, . . .

This is fun.

Use music at every opportunity.

Make individual corrections when necessary, but do not penalize the entire class.

dancingly yours,

by

beatrice de baltazar

EVERYBODY BUT EISENHOWER
attended the opening of the Sadler's Wells Ballet at the Shrine Auditorium here in winter wonderland, Los Angeles.

The auditorium seats nearly seven thousand, and it was SRO. The company's brilliant performance of LE LAC DES CYGNES, starring its leading attraction, Margot Fonteyn, completely enchanted the dazzling audience.

THE OLD YEAR RINGS OUT WITH A RECORD OF SPLENDOR THAT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO DUPLICATE.

Since its initial visit the company has stepped up its tempo and perfected its performance until it leaves connoisseur and balletomane spellbound. The corps de ballet dances in absolute unison while the troupe in general reflects the fact that its motherland are savants in pageantry.

THE WHOLE EVENING WAS EXCITING AND TUTU HEAVENLY while waiting to see outstanding personalities like Mr. and Mrs. Elliott Roosevelt file in with other socialites too numerous to mention here. The writer's seat was in the first mezzanine which is surprisingly near the stage, but we had to go down in the first intermission trying to greet Sol Hurok who brought the group from the Royal Opera House in London. We met Mrs. Bradford Bishop of South Pasadena down in front wearing a fetching Peggy Hunt creation of soft pink satin with a deeper rose inset diagonally down the back and sewed into the full skirt. The illustrious director of Robinson's Designer Salon, Jean MacDonald, was there being greeted with hugs by the most soigne designer of this country, Howard Greer. Mrs. Bishop surprised us with her technical remarks about the first Act, but no wonder, we found out that Andre Eglevsky and his family stay at her home when they are in Los Angeles. What we are trying to say is, "When you wish to know about who's who in the diplomatic, financial, social or design world, attend an opening of ballet. You'll get it firsthand."

LE LAC DES CYGNES has been revised considerably by Dame Ninette de Valois and is now done in four acts. Two dances have been added: the Pas de Six in Act I, and the Neapolitan Dance in Act III, both with choreography by Frederick Ashton. The scenery is new; designed by Leslie Hurry. Much of the coloring is in subdued blues and greens and most effective. The Czardas in Act III appeared to be the exact routine used by Pavlova. (Page 49)

Broadway Dance Beat

David Raher

▶ *Adriano Vitale* is the latest addition to the ranks of Ballet Theatre. Mr. Vitale, whose origin is the Opera Ballet in Rome, Has lately been dancing in Mexico, and tells me that he has signed a six-month contract with the Theatre company. He has been promised leads in the revival of Massine's *Aleko* and in *Graduation Ball*....

▶ *Ballet Theatre*'s return to the Met on Dec. 27th proved one of the most stimulating events of the Christmas season. The company looked youthful and fresh despite its recent vigorous tour of Europe.

▶ The single performance (a gala to raise funds for new productions) produced several novelties. A stunning new set and interesting but busy costumes of Georges Wakhevitch for Dollar's *The Combat*, was one of them. A first performance for the Ballet Theatre company finds *Melissa Hayden* in her original role of Clorinda and John Kriza in that of Tancred. The latter lacks the nobility and delineation given the role by *Francisco Moncion* of the New York City Ballet, the company that sired his work.

▶ Another novelty was Eugene Loring's *The Capital of the World* with a new score by George Antheil and decor by Estaban Frances. Better than the original, abbreviated version, Dec. 6 done for the Ford TV show called Omnibus, it uncovers a derth of talented young character dancers in the company and, not least of all, the versatility of the newly engaged Mexican ballerina, *Lupe Serrano*. Miss Serrano dances the feminine lead with verve and virtuosity.

▶ The scenario is based on the Ernest Hemingway story of a young Madrileno, a tailor's assistant, who dreams of one day becoming a great matador. But before he can realize his dream, the hapless young man is accidentally killed during a practice session in the tailor's shop. The role of the protagonist is danced brilliantly and with much attention to characterization, by Roy Fitzell, a recent addition to the Ballet Theatre company....

▶ The New York City Ballet will premiere its full version of the full length *Nutcracker* on Feb. 2nd. Choreographer Balanchine will use *Andre Eglevsky* as the Prince and *Maria Tallchief will* dance the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy. To *Tanaquil Le Clerq* will go the Waltz of the Flowers; *Yvonne Mounsey* will be the Snowflake Fairy and *Francisco Moncion* will be seen in the Danse Arabe.

▶ Mr. Balanchine will set a precedent by using thirty-five children, students of the school of American Ballet, to dance in this work. Decor for the two act ballet will be by Horace Armistead, with the costume assignment going to Karinska....

▶ In the mood for a good movie recently I called the local cinema to find out what was playing. The ensuing conversation went something like this:

'Good evening, G-----Theatre.'
'What's on tonight?'
'Murder Will Out, and Gazelle, sir.'
'Did you say Gazelle or Giselle?'
'No sir, I said Gazelle, with Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin!'

▶ Speaking of *Markova*, reminds me that the world famous ballerina shattered precedent on New Year's Eve by being the first dancer of her status to appear in an opera at the Met.

▶ At dress rehearsal, the day before the performance, La Markova had a slight tantrum over the slipperiness of the Met stage, and over music tempi. Neither of which dimmed the radiance of her performance.

▶ Choreographer Solov has given her things to dance (like double cabrioles in back, double ronde jambes en l'air, etc.) which emphasize her birdlike feet

making her look like a white dove in flight.

▶Busiest of ballerinas, Markova, after her debut in Federmaus at the Met, several days later appeared on the Show of Shows (Snowflake Fairy from Nutcracker); danced at the Waldorf Astoria on Jan. 6th for the American Fund for Israel ($100. a plate) benefit, accompanied by the NBC Symphony Orchestra; dashed off to Canada for an engagement with the Winnipeg Ballet; returned here for a matinee of Fledermaus on the 23rd of Jan., then took the plane for London on the 24th, for six performances with the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas. Phew....-

▶The music for Agnes de Mille's newest work, *Harvest Reel*, premiered at the War Memorial Opera House in San Francisco, Jan. 1st, was written by the Australian composer, Percy Grainger.

▶Mr. Grainger, now in his seventies, returned the compliment by personally arranging the score for the ballet. His Country Gardens and Molly at the Fair, are pieces known the world over.

▶Harvest Reel, now in the repertoire of the Agnes de Mille Dance Theatre, is based on Irish folk dances.

▶*Festival Ballet* due here from London in September for an American tour, will make its debut at the Met...A Greenwich Village newspaper boasted an ad veiled in the following mystery: *Ballet, taught by a well-known ballerina. Call for further information, etc.*' We called and discovered the 'well-known ballerina' to be none other than Lisa Parnova. Why the big secret, Miss Parnova?...

▶*Ballet Theatre's* gala performance at the Met. on Dec. 27th totaled $21,200 in box office receipts. The latter company's appearance at the Brooklyn Academy of Music on Jan. 1st was cheered by a capacity audience. It was an evening of personal triumphs for Alicia Alonso in Giselle, Melissa Hayden in Design With Strings and Eric Braun in Fancy Free, a ballet which retains the freshness of its premiere on April 18th 1944...

▶*John Cage* heads the group of *avant garde* composers here, whose music is much in demand by local modern dancers and dance groups. The music which is composed for magnetic tape or prepared piano is significant for the economy of notes in the score. In fact, at a recent recital we counted approximately fifteen played notes, widely spaced, as accompaniment for a dance.

▶Our astonishment at this was topped by an account of another number recently performed, for which the composer had pianist David Tudo sit at the piano for the entire length of the dance being performed, play nothing and at the con-

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clusion of the dance, shut the piano and depart!

▶*Albia Kavan* (ex-Ballet Theatre soloist) is assisting Donald Saddler with the dances for By The Beautiful Sea, forthcoming musical starring Shirley Booth....The men's dressing room at the Anderson-Ivantzov School here is more like a baseball dugout than a school dressing room. The conversation overheard there recently between three proud poppas, was not about entrechats, but about the exploits of their precocious children and the problems involved in finding baby sitters....

▶Ethnic dancer, *Matteo*, displayed some virile Spanish dancing at the joint program with Carola Goya, given on Jan. 13th at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. By way of novelty he inserted a performance of the rarely seen Scottish folk dance, Sean Truibhs (old pants) and the more familiar Sword Dance; both danced expertly. In fact, his performance compared favorably with that of Scotsman Ian Robertson of Edinburgh who is considered an expert and authority on Scottish dancing.

▶Matteo, whose other name is Vitucci, is a native of Utica, N.Y. Italian by extraction!

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the case of the Frightened Dancer

By Lou Larkin

She was scared stiff. So terrified that she was barely able to walk. Chorus girls and prop men bustled about the stage.

"One side, little girl!" bawled a man carrying scenery. "Ya wanna get hurt?"

Startled, the small blonde girl jumped back. Her lips and eyes quivered nervously. Hurt? More than the man would ever know, this girl knew what it was to be hurt.

For months, as a youngster, she lay in a hospital with a fractured skull and a damaged spine. She was given up for dead. Who would ever think that a fall from a bicycle could do so much damage.

"She'll never walk again," the doctors had said to the family. They didn't tell her, but she knew.

They finally brought her home. There was pity in the eyes of friends who came to see her. Sweet, unbearable pity.

They didn't realize it, but every kind word cut her heart like a knife. She fought back the tears and said, "I'll walk again. I know I will. Nothing can stop me!"

One day the world was wonderful again. She walked. The struggle with her body had been won. But new adversaries arose.

She returned to school. Self-consciousness, an aftermath of the injuries, and a naturally shy temperament, made her days almost as dreary as the ones in the hospital.

"Look at the way she walks," the cruel ones said. "Can you imagine a boy wanting to dance with that!"

In front of an attic mirror—as she had learned to walk—she learned to dance.

"I can dance," she told the cruel ones triumphantly. But the cruel ones never change.

"So you dance," they said. "What are we supposed to do, bow down?" They showed her a chorus girl ad. "Go dance, smartie."

She was snapped back to the reality of the rehearsal stage by the sound of her name. "You're next, kid. Can ya dance? Sing?" The "kid" nodded.

"Okay, hit it!"

The "kid" hit it all right—the front line of a Broadway musical, Sing Out the News. She kept right on hitting it.

Today she is in the hearts of American movie-goers as a singer, a dancer, an actress, a wife and mother. Who is she? Turn to page 63 for the answer.

HERE'S A TIP!

For over (3) years the publishers of the DANCING STAR have held the price at 15 cents ($1.50 yearly). . . With postage, printing paper et al climbing steadily in price, it is now necessary to increase the rate . . . Why not SUBSCRIBE or RENEW your subscription before the rate increase goes into effect . . . (See inside back cover for a subscription blank.)

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LONDON FOOTNOTES

by

PETER CRAIG-RAYMOND

★ ★ ★ **Felicity Gray** walked out of her own first night, after the first ballet. So Theatre Ballet Arts had an unhappy start and an even less happy press. A spoken monologue accompanies one of the short works by talented **Wendy Hilton.**

★ ★ ★ **Roland Petit** revived the DIAMOND CRUNCHER (which made Renee Jeanmaire famous) with Liliane Montevecchi in London during December. **Jean Babilee** and **Leslie Caron** joined the company for this season and Leslie stays with Petit for his American tour.

★ ★ ★ London's first sight of Soviet dancers was tremendously impressive, even the amateur propaganda of local Communists could not blunt it. **Alla Shelest, Konstantin Shatilov** and **Farmanyantz** have a modern-influenced style built solidly on fine technique. Although only very short items — single variations from ESMERELDA, TARUS BULBA, etc. — were shown, the technical bravura and theatrical sense of these dancers was well proven.

★ ★ ★ The current and coming boom in ballet throughout Australia and New Zealand has made inroads in soloist ranks here. Several leading dancers, including **Trunoff, Algeranova** and **Algernoff,** have already left London to join Australian companies.

★ ★ ★ I notice that the New York FILM IN REVIEW reprints part of my argument with critic **Edith Barking** and **A. V. Coton** in their November issue. I am complimented — but in the original I did not give myself the trilogue's lion share as reading this reprint would make it seem!

★ ★ ★ Teacher **Klari Szechy** here is training dancers under the same system that produced Nora Kovach and Istvan Rabovsky. She was taught alongside the now-famous duo for seven years by Budapest **ballet maistre** Ferenc Nadassy. Impressively theatrical and highly-polished, I think Nadassy's thinking on the basic Cecchetti technique will come to have wide-spanning effect.

★ ★ ★ Impatience is circulating quite a deal of rumour here as to why Gene Kelly's no-dialogue INVITATION TO THE DANCE has still no MGM release date. The few colour stills I have seen promise a fine dance film in this. If and when we see it. Or perhaps Kelly's INVITATION has become to home office what Ford's RED BADGE OF COURAGE became two years ago: a misfit.

★ ★ ★ **DANCING STAR** readers may be interested to note that the new art covers **(DANCING STAR)** have brought some favourable comment in to me. Unusual and interesting is the reaction here.

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★ ★ ★ Ballet dancers are being employed in several provincial cities here to teach "poise" to ballroom professionals. The largest ballroom circuit here, Mecca, has added a new hall in Sale, Manchester

★ ★ ★ Three new associations are in the air here. One is campaigning for more dance music on the deep-freezed B. B. C. The second is an amateur ballroom group infringing on Official Board reserves. And the third is a rather "lost cause" attempt to form a union of dance teachers inside the Socialist Party.

★ ★ ★ With so many ballet groups refusing to enter the centre of London and playing outlying and inaccessible suburbs. I am proposing a fourth group: one intended to confirm the critics' status as Londoners and not roving reporters to Asia Minor! Poor joke, but timely.

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Jeanne Fae
Photo by Bill Cogan

Wanted: More Boys for Ballet

By Dick Holden

Ballet is becoming increasingly popular in America. Recent films, such as "The Red Shoes," "Limelight," "Hans Christian Andersen," and several TV programs which feature ballet have made us a more dance-conscious nation. As a result, our ballet companies are performing to capacity houses throughout the country as never before.

This is indeed heartening to us balletomanes, who remember that prior to a few years ago the very suggestion of attending a ballet performance was enough to provoke violent antagonism from the average American male. Women as well, though perhaps less intense in their feelings, cared little for ballet.

* * *

The idea of a male dancer was even more ill-defined, unless he was an extravagently paid and publicized star of stage and screen. In fact, the very word "ballet" meant something foreign and unknown, and like anything that is not understood, it was feared.

But now that ballet is again coming back into it's own as a vital and wonderful form of entertainment, and making multitudes of new friends too, it is also encouraging many young men to consider it as a worthy profession to enter. And how it needs them!

The ballet is never mature and complete unless it has both men and women of the finest type in its ranks. Fokine realized this when the ballet of his day was becoming tiresome with the male continually outnumbered by the female and pushed into the background. This was unnatural. I feel an all-girl ballet is as ridiculous as an all-boy ballet. With Fokine's reforms, the male resumed his natural position as an equal with the female and gave to ballet the element it was lacking.

Since then, there has been a sizable male contingent in every ballet company, but now that ballet is growing ever more in demand, the need is felt for a greater number of well-trained male dancers.

* * *

Where will they come from? This is a problem, for parents still encourage their daughters but not their sons to learn the dance craft, thinking that dancing should be reserved for womenfolk. The reason that boys themselves do not choose to study ballet is because they have a mistaken idea that it is "sissy-stuff" and only for girls. They would rather choose sports. But is dance any less virile than sports? Hardly, for ballet technique is filled with as many feats of strength and endurance as athletics, if not more.

You, too, can discover its charm. Even if you have no desire to become a professional dancer on the stage, you can experience the joy which comes with ballet dancing. The next time a dance company is performing near you, be sure to attend. If you like what you see, there is no harm in joining a dance school and participating in this free and wholesome art. And if you desire to make a career of dancing, be assured, you are entering into a lively, manly occupation. One with a great and noble tradition. One which needs fine, healthy young men.

- Reprinted from the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR -

DANCINGLY YOURS (from page 41)

Fonteyn was in rare form and reigned supreme as Swan Queen. Her sensitive interpretation was highlighted with a spark for sensationalism when in the Black Swan Pas de Deux her 32 fouettes hurried the score conductor, John Hollingsworth, to full speed.

The surprise of the evening, however, was Michael Somes, who executed his leaps and turns with swiftness, precision and such extension that he appeared never to touch the stage floor. His applause was terrific.

BACK TO THE AUDIENCE,

Zsa Zsa Gabor was there looking like a Dresden doll. Someone stepped on the tulle bustle of Mitzi Gaynor and ripped if off. No harm was done as her resourceful boy friend, Jack Bean, bent over and pinned back the torn trailing flounce. To say the least, the delighted audience was delightful, too. (Page 59)

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on with the dance

The startling career of José Limón

Peggy Muñoz

(Part Two)

During these intense efforts to arrive at a dance medium that was intrinsically American, José Limón never forgot his Mexican background. His pieces have always carried a distinct Mexican flavor, even for such Broadway musicals as *Roberta* and *I'd Rather Be Right.* "My Broadway experiences," he comments wryly, "taught me beyond a doubt that my art should be a more serious venture than pure entertainment. Today there are too many clever pseudo-artists in the world, who can make an audience forget its problems instead of challenging people to face life and the times courageously with their eyes open. I refuse to believe that people want only to be entertained, or that a real artist must descend to that level."

Apparently these views have permeated Limón's work, for critics agree that he is an artist of basic integrity. "In these days," wrote John Martin in *The New York Times,* "when the healthy trend of the dance toward the theater sometimes looks more like a mad scramble toward 'show business,' it is reassuring to find a group of artists like José Limón and his gifted associates working incorruptibly as artists, with dignity and substance. . . . Frequently, it is true, there is a hint of something besides mere cynicism in the charge that dancers who approach their art with dedication have nothing else to approach it with; but here is a company well above the average in personableness, skill, and charm, who could doubtless make a slick success of it, individually or collectively, if they chose. Happily, they do not so choose."

In 1940, José Limón left the Humphrey-Weidman group to go to the Pacific Coast on his own, but returned to New York two years later to give dual recitals with Doris Humphrey. In 1943 he was inducted into the United

States Army. "Since I was then an old man of thirty-five, I was placed in the Quartermaster Corps, and I thought that this was surely the end of me. But after nine months, I was put in Special Services to direct the dances for various Army shows. My life was saved once more."

When he was discharged in October 1945, Limón collected a small company of equally dedicated young dancers, including Letitia Ide, Pauline Koner, Betty Jones, and later Lukas Hoving and Ruth Currier, with whom he began to work under the name "José Limón and Dance Company." Doris Humphrey, who had retired as a dancer in 1945, became the company's artistic director, and shortly afterward produced her own choreographic masterpieces—*Lament for Ignacio Sánchez Mejías,* a tragedy based on the poem by García Lorca and danced by Limón, and *The Story of Mankind,* a biting satire on man's preoccupation with his own self-destruction, performed by Limón with Beatrice Sekler.

From this time on, Limón's name was a byword in the annals of modern dance. He was best known for his settings of classical music, such as a Vivaldi concerto grosso and Bach's *Chaconne in D Minor;* the poignant Mexican ballet *La Malinche,* with music by Norman Lloyd; and his magnificent version of *Othello* entitled *The Moor's Pavane,* a set of antique dances set to the music of Purcell, which won the National Critics' Prize for 1950. Martin of *The New York Times* said of it: ☛

The Moor's Pavane, *based on* Othello *and set to music by Purcell, won Limón and his troupe the 1950 National Critics' Prize*

> It is not, strictly speaking, a pavane at all, but it has the stateliness of a pavane and the air of antiquity and formality. But the dramatic theme constantly dominates the scene, sometimes dictating the movement, but just as often breaking through its surface with passions of its own.
>
> The action is close-knit, intense, without a wasted gesture or an unnecessary development, yet there is great variety of mood and movement and a steady building to the inevitable climax. The individual characters have the utmost clarity and their movement is extraordinarily evocative under the dark, rather smothering atmosphere which envelops it. . . . It is a completely stunning work.

In May, 1950, José Limón and Dance Company went to Paris with Ruth Page's Chicago Ballet under the joint title *Les Ballets Américaines*. They were received with violent hostility at the Champs Elysées Theater, where they were considered "much too American" and lacking in the polished grace of the classical dance. Eventually, however, both *La Malinche* and *The Moor's Pavane* were awarded tremendous ovations. The following September Limón accepted an invitation from Miguel Covarrubias, who was then head of the dance department in Mexico's National Institute of Fine Arts, to bring his renowned company and its entire repertoire to Mexico.

It was his first appearance as a dancer in his native land, to which he had not returned since his hurried departure at the age of seven. "We were delighted to notice that the Mexican public was not only receptive to but also intelligently perceptive about works that we had feared would be incomprehensible," he asserted. "Even the taxi drivers expressed enthusiasm for the work we were doing, an experience that has never happened to me in New York. It was good to be home again."

The Mexican critics were as generous as the taxi drivers in lavishing praise upon José Limón. He was called "the finest dancer in the world," "a prophet with honor in his own country"; comments dwelt upon his "incomparable equilibrium" and "inexhaustible variety of movement." Junius, of *Excélsior*, remarked that "even those devotees of the classical ballet who have refused to accept the modern dance were seen joining in a clamorous ovation."

Covarrubias begged Limón to return in January 1951 as a guest artist to teach for five months at the government's Academy of Mexican Dance and to direct the spring season of the local *Ballet Mexicano*, which was then and is still creating a typically Mexican dance form in the modern idiom. Limón was also commissioned by the government to do the choreography for *Los Cuatro Soles* (The Four Suns), a grandiose ballet in four acts

based on the Aztec legend of Creation, with music by

Limón is married to costume designer Pauline Lawrence. They live in a New Jersey barn, remodeled into a roomy home and studio

Carlos Chávez. This was the most ambitious ballet he ever attempted, and although it had its moments of splendor it cannot be considered as more than a partial success. It was just too big and complicated to make any definite point, either esthetic or philosophical, nor was the Chávez musical score a particularly good example of what that composer is capable of.

Another Limón creation during this same season was *Tonanzintla*, a chamber ballet using five dancers and the lovely music of Friar Antonio Soler in an arrangement by Rodolfo Hafftler. *Tonanzintla* was inspired by the sumptuous and yet ingenuous spirit of early Mexican baroque art, as exemplified in the decorations of the Church of Santa María Tonanzintla, near Cholula in Puebla State. The *Mexico City News* reported that "the dance is a delightful representation of the birthday party of a tiny cherub, who is entertained by her celestial companions, the angels and archangels. The elaborate and colorful décor by Miguel Covarrubias and the happy choreography of José Limón combined to produce a truly Mexican ballet that portrays with authentic baroque flavor the simplicity of provincial Indians, who clothe their saints with so much brilliant fancy, and at the same time make them so downright human that Heaven seems very close to earth indeed."

Many critics, noting that most of Limón's best pieces have been concerned with the baroque, have described

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him as a baroque personality expressing our modern age.

Accompanied by Doris Humphrey, Limón again left his New York company to return to Mexico for the 1951 season of the *Ballet Mexicano* at the Palace of Fine Arts. His choreography for *Redes* to music by Silvestre Revueltas for performance by Mexican dancers showed the boy from Sinaloa at the height of his creative powers.

Another high point of the season was Limón's choreography of *Antigone*, to music by Carlos Chávez. Composed in the simple, austere manner of the Greek tragedians, the ballet was a completely successful transformation of the original Sophocles drama into the dance medium.

During the 1952 winter season, Limón took his New York company on a successful tour of the United States. The dancers spent their summer, as in years past, at the American Dance Festival in New London, Connecticut, with public performances from August 7 through August 22. The *New York Herald Tribune* critic Walter Perry wrote that the festival was a unique "opportunity to center one's attentions upon the finest of male dancers in the field of modern dance, upon one of the most perfect of dance companies, and upon a program directed by a great woman of the dance theater, Doris Humphrey."

Now dividing his time between his own company in the States and the *Ballet Mexicano* in Mexico City, Limón is amused by the way both countries claim him as their own. He says that for him the Rio Grande does not exist as a national boundary. "Having been born in one country and brought up in another makes one realize the utter futility of aggressive nationalism. I belong to both and both belong to me."

NOTE: Because of space limitations this article will be concluded next month.

Teachers' and Students'

section

Acrobatic & Tumbling Illustrations

Dance Teachers' Associations

Index of Dance Schools

Diary of a Career Girl

Classified Advertising

Studio Events

Studio

Audrey Gros, 9 year-old student of the Frank Rey School of Dance, Tampa, Florida, recently appeared on a benefit-for-the-needy show in Tampa and Tarpon Springs, Florida.
-Photo by Keith Studio

• DANCE TEACHERS — *PLEASE NOTE* •
You are welcome to send **NEWS** and **PHOTOGRAPHS** of yourself and your students to these pages. All material will be considered for publication, but none can be acknowledged or returned. **PHOTOS** should be **CLEAR** and **GLOSSY**. Mail to: **STUDIO EVENTS, % DANCING STAR, 376 Almaden Ave., San Jose, California.**

WHO'S TIRED?

EDITOR'S NOTE: The other day we received an interesting letter from Danny Hoctor, part of which we thought would be of interest to our readers, so we quote:
....I told our agent to put us back to work, and he sure did! Opened at the Chicago Theater with Julius La Rosa and have been doing 5 and 6 shows a day. We only do three routines a show, and while that may seem quite easy to an audience, I got to thinking one day while trying to catch my breath between shows; boy, if they only knew just how much work it really is, so I started jotting down a few figures and facts that are unknown to most people. And the more I put down the more tired I became. The following figures are based on the six shows per day we did on the first week here (at this writing we are on the sixth day of our second week) and are only doing five shows!

AMOUNT OF STAIRS WALKED DAILY—168 Our dressing room is one flight up and there are 21 stairs. We do this six times a day, plus the two extra times when we go out for meals. This does not include the number of times we are called to the telephone or stage door.

TIMES DRESSED AND UNDRESSED DAILY —24! On one show we get undressed, dressed into costume, then undressed and dressed in regular clothes, those 4 times multiplied by 6 equal 24. This does not include getting dressed in the morning or undressed at night.

DANCE ROUTINES A DAY—18 dance routines! Our act consists of 3 routines. We open with a double then I do a single and

Johhny Mattison, popular tap teacher and performer, poses with one of the classes he taught during the last DMA convention in New York City. Johnny is at present on an extended teaching tour of the United States.
-Photo by John A. Winn-

Events

'SYMPHONY BALLET' TO BE PRESENTED

A 'Symphony Ballet' will be presented jointly by the Peninsula Youth Symphony and the Ziceva Ballet, Feb. 20-21 at the San Mateo High School Auditorium, in San Mateo, California.

The 'Symphony' is an organization of highly trained young musicians under the direction of Aron Sten, who also conducts the Peninsula Symphony (many of whose members are with the San Francisco Symphony).

The Ziceva Ballet will present 'Chopiniana', a version of Les Sylphides, with choreography by Olga Ziceva after M. Fokine. Also on the program is an original work arranged to portions of Saint-Saens brilliant piano concertos No. 2 and No. 4. Performances will be held Saturday at 8:30 P.M., Feb. 20th and Sunday at 2:30 P.M., Feb. 21.

●

we close with a double.

AMOUNT OF FOUETTES DONE DAILY BY BETTY—96! In our last routine Betty does 16 fouettes, plus 6 comes to 96.

AMOUNT OF TAPS HIT DAILY BY DANNY —4,086! And this does not include the taps hit in the two double dances, just my solo. My solo is a tap routine against the drummer's conga beat. There are 13 steps and the number of taps are as follows:

1st Step—9 taps repeated 4 times equals 36
2nd Step—13 taps repeated 3 times equals 46
3rd Step—9 taps repeated 4 times equals 36
4th Step—17 taps repeated 2 times equals 34
5th Step—12 taps repeated 3 times equals 36
6th Step—10 taps repeated 5 times equals 50
7th Step—10 taps repeated 8 times equals 80
8th Step—9 taps repeated 3 times equals 27
9th Step—12 taps repeated 8 times equals 96
10th Step—19 taps repeated 3 times equals 57
11th Step—10 taps repeated 8 times equals 80
12th Step—7 taps repeated 8 times equals 56
13th Step—44 taps, exit step not repeated, 44

Total amount of taps each show 681
Shows per day 6
Total amount of taps per day 4,086

Some of these days I'll figure out the number of taps we do in the other two routines, but right now I'm too tired....

●

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DANCE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS

YOU ARE WELCOME TO SEND NEWS OF YOUR ASSOCIATION TO THIS COLUMN.

DANCE MASTERS OF WISCONSIN held a One-Day Travelling Normal School which was sponsored by the CNADM at the Pfister Hotel in Milwaukee, Wisc. Jan. 24th. The faculty included: Edna Christensen, Ballroom; June Rold, Baby Dances; Robert Ziegler, Tap; Richard Ellis and Christine Du Bouley, Ballet; Sylvester Smith, Acrobatic, and Grace Hanson, Ballroom. A special dinner was held in the hotel's private dining room.

THE TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF DANCING held its 24th Annual Convention at the Adolphus Hotel in Dallas, Texas Dec. 27-28-29. Faculty members included: Gertrude Edwards Jory, Ballet; Johnny Mattison, Tap; Edna Lucille Baum, Children's Work; Buster Cooper, Jazz Modern; Bob Calvert, Ballroom, and Peggy Lorenz, Records. Officers elected were: Jack Storey, President; Virginia Self, 1st V.P.; Peggy Lorenz, 2nd V.P.; Lillian Cain, Corresponding Secretary, and Frances Burgess Bleeker, Sec-Treas. Board of Directors are: Goodlow Lewis, Peggy Starr, and Ella Ilse. 1954 Summer Normal will be held in Dallas, Texas the last week in June.

CECCHETTI COUNCIL OF AMERICA'S newly formed West Coast branch held its first official meeting Dec. 6th at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, in Hollwood, Calif. Faculty included West Coast Director, Olga Fricker, Anne Toland, Peggy Slater, Mona Frances, Resident Agent, Margaret Ketchum, and Germaine Ballou.

CHICAGO NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DANCE MASTERS met in an all-day meeting Jan. 10th in Indianapolis, Ind. On the faculty were: Leo Kehl, Beginners & Intermediate Tap Technique & Dances; LaVergne Blissner, Semi-Advanced Tap for Children; Elsa Stigler, Spanish Dance & Castanet Technique; Sylvester Smith, Acrobatics & Beginners Acrobatic Technique; Richard & Christine Du Boulay Ellis, Ballet Technique and Variation from Coppelia & Dance of the Hours, 3rd Act; Bobby Ziegler, Advanced Tap; There was also a special Volunteer Ballroom Session which was followed by a banquet and entertainment.

FOLK DANCE FEDERATION OF CALIFORNIA was represented at a benefit hosted by the Menlos Amigos folk dancers of Menlo Park, Calif. to raise funds for the March of Dimes. The celebration took place Jan. 9th at the Burgess Gym. Nearly 400 folk and square dancers contributed some $350 for the National Infantile Paralysis Foundation. Aside from general dancing, entertainment was presented with TV star, Deputy Dave Allen acting as M.C. Ten year-old Judy Hernandez danced two Spanish numbers. Grace Perryman and Virgil Morton danced the Mexican Jarabe Tlaxcalteco and the Mirage Tango. The San Francisco Dance Guild presented two Horas from Roumania. Virgil Morton was General Director of Affairs.

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Babies from the 'Good Ship Lollipop' are shown in the line number they danced for the Elk's Club Show in San Francisco recently. The midgets are from the Peaches Kane school.

-Photo by Paul Wolfe.

Dance Lines

★ Gordon Keith

Because of this month's space limitations we'll just say that we hope you enjoy the variety of articles in this issue....

And just a reminder to tell you that if your subscription is about to expire, NOW is the time to renew it!..or if you have been thinking about subscribing, but just haven't got around to it...NOW is the time to do it! Before the rate goes up. Beginning next month (March) single copies of Dancing Star will be 25 cents, so you'll SAVE MONEY if you mail in your subscription NOW!

●

DANCINGLY YOURS (from page 49)

THE APPLAUSE WAS NOT OVER EVEN WITH THE FINAL CURTAIN BOW, for from there the fortunate ones adjourned to the swank Embassy Room at the Ambassador Hotel where the Junior League of L. A. presided over the Ballet Ball, with Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes as guests. This premiere was not only an artistic triumph, but a social one, as well.

The company still stresses classical ballets in full-length. Of the six new works brought as the repertoire for the U. A. tour, Los Angeles saw only three, THE SHADOW, HOMAGE, and SYLVIA.

Sadler's Wells operates on a no-star rotational principle of casting. Here is a quote from the company's publicity release:
"Under the Sadler's Wells system the company is the star. There is no such thing as a prima ballerina or a leading danseur although the featured dancers include many brilliant young soloists, such as Margot Fonteyn, Nadia Nerina, Violetta Elvin, Rowena Jackson, Svetlana Beriosova, Michael Somes, Alexis Rassine and John Field."

1953 dance audiences here have filled to capacity the huge Hollywood Bowl, Philharmonic, Shrine Auditorium, Biltmore and Greek Theatres. Los Angeles balletomanes are sincerely enthusiastic, and eagerly await the NEW YEAR IN DANCE!

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Diary of a Career-Girl

This is the 19th *installment of an actual day - by - day diary written by dancer,* Peachie Kane, *who is at present furthering her theatrical career by studying at the Pasadena Playhouse.*

(Copyright 1954 by DANSTAR PRESS)

Wednesday, February 20th

This A.M. I choreographed a dance for Bill Linten and Patti Regan which took almost the entire morning, but it was worth it as we got a darling routine out of it.

In the afternoon we rushed home, got all dressed up and Coralie took Billie, Myrne, Gloria, Dolores and me to CBS where we saw the Bing Crosby show. His guest stars were Bob Crosby and Bob's daughter, Kathy. It was wonderful. It was hard to realize though, that I was actually hearing and seeing Bing in person.

Thursday, February 21st

This morning (horrors of horrors!) neither Dolores nor I heard the alarm go off and I didn't wake up till 9:30! I've never done that before. I bounded out of bed and arrived at school by 9:50, only to discover that Jack hadn't even missed me.

Worked all morning on choreography with Diane and Ruthie and we finished their dance. In the afternoon we had History and Literature and then our group from dance class met in the Green Room to do a dance problem (due tomorrow). We worked for ½ hr. and then went to dinner. After dinner I practiced my own dancing for an hour.

At eleven o'clock we had a Magic Pond rehearsal. What a mess it was. One of the 3rd year students was given the task of choreographing the new part of the show. He is a modern dancer. Now I have nothing against modern dance—in fact I like it, but this show is not the type for it. He has never done choreography before with more than one or two people and he's really confused. And so are we! We don't know how many counts of music we have or anything! All in all, I'm rather disgusted with the whole affair.

Friday, February 22nd

We rehearsed like mad on 'The Merchant Gentleman' this A.M. I didn't sit down once from 8:30 'til 11:30.

Jack gave us some very complicated blocking. He told us that this particular scene would probably be the most difficult we'd ever have to do. It will certainly be effective if we can do it the way it should be done.

I've been assigned half the choreography for the dance sequence and Charles Leslie the other half. Charles is in charge of the romantic waltz between the four lovers. Some of the kids get pretty upset with Charles because he spends so much time

A few of the teachers and students who met at a recent Seminar of the Cecchetti Council which was held at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel in Hollywood, Calif. Left to right: Nancy Shaw, Nina Ness, Anne Toland, Olga Fricker, Mona Frances, Peggy Slater, Germaine Ballou and Sallie Mernaugh.

demonstrating and he can't seem to understand why people don't catch on to his ideas quickly. I respect Charles very much, tho; he knows exactly what he wants and some of his ideas are very good, but I'm afraid he's not aware of the limitations of some of the people he's working with.

Latley, Speech and Dance have dealt with the style of the Restoration period. We are learning all about the elegance and grace in speech and movement of the people who lived during the Restoration. Miss Challgren has a most entertaining way of describing the affectations of these people. She says their main thoughts were 'Don't you think I'm the most elegant thing you ever saw?' And she tells how 'charmingly' they slandered, scandalized, etc.

Our rehearsal tonight was worse than last night! It bothers me to have to stand there and watch so many errors being made and so many things being done which contradict all I've been taught about line, balance etc. But I can't say anything. If they wanted my opinion they'd have asked me for it. If this sounds like sour grapes, it really isn't. I wonder what Julia Farnsworth and Mary Reynolds will say about it. They will see it tomorrow.

Saturday, February 23rd

9:30 performance of 'Magic Pond'—they said it went better than last week. I'm glad it's over...

I met Don Rollins tonight and he asked me if I'd like to go for coffee. He has been very nice and I saw no reason to refuse. So we went and had a very pleasant discussion about shows and our recent plays. I'm glad that bygones are bygones. I don't like to hold grudges; I guess the saying that time heals wounds of the heart is true.

(continued in next issue)

ACROBATICS & TUMBLING

BY JAMES A. ROZANAS

This is the *10th* in a series of illustrated ACROBATIC and TUMBLING tricks by one of America's foremost authorities on the subject. Why not start a scrapbook of these excellent illustrations — or better, yet, file them in a permanent **DANCING STAR BINDER** each month.

FRONT SPOTTERS (Left)

Spotters are a series of continuous walkovers done in one spot. Start the same as for a regular walkover except that the hands are placed right by the forward foot or even slightly back of it. As each walkover is finished, the left leg does not land on the floor in front, but swings thru to the back and is placed on the floor about two feet in back of the right foot. The weight is then shifted to the left leg and the right leg is brought backward and upward, landing on the right leg in front. As the left leg comes down in front again it is brought to the back and over. At all times the head and arms are kept together and the body weight is continuously being transferred from one leg to the other. Can also be done to the opposite side.

BACK SPOTTERS (Right)

Start the same as for a regular back walkover, except that the hands are placed on the floor, alongside of the left foot or even slightly forward of the left foot. At the completion of each back walkover, instead of finishing with the left foot in the rear of the right, the left leg swings forward about two feet in front of the right foot. Immediately transfer the body weight to the left leg and swing the right leg forward, upward and over, landing on the right leg, followed by the left leg over swinging forward once more in front of the right. Keep on and over for at least twelve or sixteen back walkovers. The hands must always land in the same place each time and the body weight is continually being transferred from one leg to the other. After the first back walkover the left foot only lands on the floor in front and the right leg lands on the floor in back. The head and arms are held close together and act as a single unit throughout the entire trick. Can also be done to the opposite side.

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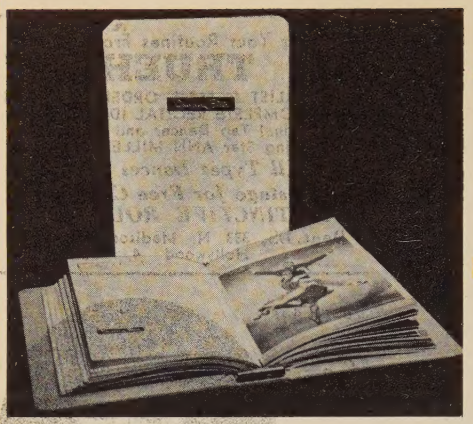

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